



Human Rights Commission
Final Minutes

Date: Thursday, June 22, 2023

Time: 8:00 PM

Location: 27 Maple Street, HHS Conference Room, 2nd Floor

Conducted by Hybrid (Remote and In-Person)

Notice to the Public on meeting privacy To prevent abuse of video conferencing technology (i.e., Zoom Bombing), all participants, including members of the public, wishing to engage via the Zoom App must register for each meeting and will notice multi-step authentication protocols. Please allow additional time to join the meeting. Further, members of the public who wish to participate without providing their names may still do so by registering to receive the meeting info and using the dial-in telephone information provided.

When: May 18, 2023, 08:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

On March 29, 2023, Governor Healey signed into law a supplemental budget bill that extends the temporary provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2025. Specifically, this extension allows public bodies to continue holding meetings remotely without a quorum of the public body being physically present at a meeting location and to provide "adequate, alternative" access to remote meetings. The language does not make any substantive changes to the Open Meeting Law other than extending the expiration date of the temporary provisions regarding remote meetings from March 31, 2023, to March 31, 2025.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/updated-guidance-on-holding-meetings-pursuant-to-the-act-extending-certain-covid-19-measures>

Meeting called to order at 8:03 pm

Present: Co-Chairs Carney and Pusey; Commissioners Bauer, Beauchemin, Brown, Grossman, Jones, Key, Rogers, Soneja

Absent: Commissioners Bryant and Horowitz

DEI Division Staff: Teresa Marzilli, Jillian Harvey

Arlington Public Schools (APS) Staff: Margaret Credle Thomas

Arlington Police Department: Captain Richard Flynn

Guests: none

1. Remote Meeting Notice and Land Acknowledgement - read by Co-Chair Carney
2. APS 2022 Equity Audit Discussion with Margaret Credle Thomas, APS Director of Diversity, Equality, Inclusion, Belonging, and Justice

- a. Margaret described her role and its start. Shortly after she began, it was agreed that the APS needed to complete an Equity Audit that began during the winter of 2022. The final report was submitted in August 2022 and was reviewed and presented to the School Committee. The six recommendations are included in the APS Strategic Priority Plan.
 - b. The Strategic Priority Plan is beginning to be implemented at this time. Leadership is working over the summer on interventions, which will begin in the fall of 2023 and are seen as shared responsibilities between all administrators and staff. Elevating student voices was one example provided by Margaret.
 - c. Margaret appreciated that the audit was done but also that it looked at what the schools are doing well. Many stakeholders were a part of the audit and had a voice in a variety of settings. Empathy interviews were conducted by a range of people (banks of questions were used and built upon; those asking the questions were trained).
 - d. Comments and questions by Commissioners included: the visual provided was helpful; to find underrepresented people, Margaret noted that 'snowballing' was used by asking people who should be spoken to, and participants were informed that their voices were needed so that the district could act upon their concerns; the recommendation that the department be expanded has been followed with hirings occurring; an internal, one-year position was created to look at structures, e.g., bias incident reporting (a pilot system at AHS has been employed this year); struck by how often student names were mispronounced at AHS graduation - Margaret described strategies to remedy this; Margaret reported on how the superintendent communicated the newly revised procedures for reporting hate incidents to school leaders.
 - e. Margaret was reminded that the AHRC wants to work with and support her and the efforts of the district. Margaret noted that she and Jillian meet bi-weekly, Margaret and Commissioner Grossman speak monthly, and there is interest in collaborating on events to educate the parent/caregiver community. Margaret expressed her appreciation for working with the AHRC.
 - f. Plans for the upcoming school year include:
 - i. Margaret and/or the new specialist will complete "residencies" of at least a week in each school
 - ii. Working with ACMI to teach about observances
3. Review of May 2023 Meeting Minutes
- a. Commissioner Bauer moved that the minutes be accepted with minor adjustments; Commissioner Pusey seconded. Unanimously accepted with two abstentions.
4. Incidents & Complaints - Captain Flynn reported on:
- a. A neighbor dispute occurred with no contact information.
 - b. A neighbor dispute with contact information and no information.
 - c. A report came from Arlington Catholic High School that occurred in a locker room in which a boy was hazed and bullied. The coach stopped the practice, the season ended for the team, and the parents were pleased with the school's

response.

- d. A malicious destruction report came in from Belknap Street.
 - e. At Thorndike Field, the Arlington Soccer Club reported an incident to police and took the lead. Since it was sensitive in nature and seemed not in the AHRC's purview, there was no further discussion.
 - f. The follow-up on the landlord dispute discussed last month continues to need to be addressed by Commissioner Brown with Co-Chair Carney.
 - g. First Amendment training was provided to the APD by the town attorneys.
 - h. Some community events will be coming up this summer, including a two-day camp.
 - i. Captain Flynn participated in crosswalk painting for Pride Month, and he reported that there were no incidents reported.
 - j. Commissioner Bauer attended National Night Out last year and recommended that the AHRC participate; Captain Flynn was supportive of the idea. It occurs on August 1st this year.
5. DEI Update
- a. Teresa reported on the Juneteenth Celebration, which went well.
 - b. Teresa and Jillian have been participating in Pride Month events.
 - c. Continuing to move forward on addressing the Equity Audit.
 - d. There will be wheelchairs at the Res for handicap accessibility.
6. MAHRC Update
- a. Commissioner Soneja reported:
 - i. There was a discussion about the Cities for the Treaty of Discrimination against Women. Commissioner Soneja will present more information at a future AHRC meeting.
 - ii. The annual MAHRC conference at the State House occurred in May, which he participated in. Health equity was the theme for the day. A presentation was provided by Citizens for Juvenile Justice to increase the age to 20 for people to be charged as a juvenile. Many organizations, including police departments, are supporting this effort.
 - iii. Commissioner Soneja also attended a day at the State House in which the Indigenous Peoples' agenda was addressed; there were speeches followed by lobbying legislators.
7. Working Groups Update
- a. Schools & Education - discussed calendaring issues
 - b. Outreach/Events - community member is very interested in sponsoring a Day of Mourning, and feedback has been given; there was only time to discuss Events; Historical Society wants to co-sponsor an event next May; June 24th - the reading of the charge of Prince Hall will occur at the Masonic Temple on Academy Street
 - c. Communication -
 - i. Newsletter came out last week that included an extremely informative story and a call for a new Commissioner; the hope is that in September, there will be one about Hispanic American Month; many thanks for this newsletter were given.
 - ii. A community member brought up an issue regarding no signage or information about Indigenous people. Commissioner Pusey has been participating in the Working Group to develop the Foot of the Rocks and is looking for Indigenous historians to help with this project; some suggestions were made. There are three focus areas - telling the untold

story, battlefield monument, and a 'waypoint' to send people to other historical sites, including the BIPOC and Indigenous stories.

- iii. We need to spread the leadership for this WG because Commissioner Pusey will be taking on Co-Chair duties.
- d. 250th Committee - Commissioner Beauchemin is participating.
- e. Town Day (Saturday, Sept. 23) - Booth has been secured. We need at least two people to organize it; please let Commissioner Carney know within a week if willing to step in. A new tent and swag (pens and bags) to hand out have been ordered. We have signs and brochures. Need something to draw people into the table (e.g., last year we asked visitors to complete a survey).

8. Commissioner Participation and Expectations

- a. Commissioner Grossman went over the background and rationale for this document, in particular, to manage the workload and do all that is hoped for, everyone needs to pitch in.
- b. Commissioner Bauer highlighted the expectations, possibilities, and challenges that we have been facing
- c. Discussion highlights:
 - i. Some WGs are perennials; others can be sunsetted
 - ii. The 'headcount' piece is a challenge in that commissioners need to step onto WGs, and recruiting community members is important; including interns and writers (high school and college) were ideas offered.
 - iii. Orienting commissioners is a good time to help new commissioners determine which WGs they are interested in.
 - iv. Everyone should be figuring out which groups they want to join
 - v. Commissioner Bauer will send out the descriptions and a spreadsheet for sign-ups.
 - vi. Other suggestions included asking new Commissioners to attend each of the group meetings a certain number of times to help them determine their interest, might have a 'mentor' assigned and/or have the co-chairs do this for new Commissioners, contacting ACMI as a way to outreach for community members to become involved in WGs, and could reach out to people who did not become appointed and ask them to be involved in WGs.
 - vii. It was agreed that we would stay with the Working Groups that we currently have.

9. Co-Chairs Report

- a. Commissioners Jolin and Rogers opted not to be reappointed. Their contributions were recognized and appreciated.
- b. Met with the DEI Division commissions.
- c. There is a Disabilities Commission newsletter - there are no openings at this time, and everyone was encouraged to sign up for the newsletter.

10. Community Input - none

11. Announcements - There was a call out to attend the School Committee meeting re: a resolution to support LGBTQIA+, which passed and was appreciated.

12. Next meetings – Tuesday, July 18, and Wednesday, August 16

- a. Incident Handling
 - June: Commissioner Soneja
 - July: Commissioner Carney

August: Commissioner Beauchemin

13. Adjournment - Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Key. Unanimously passed at 9:38 pm

Next meeting: Tuesday, July 18, 2023, 8:00 pm, Remote/Hybrid Participation

Anyone needing accessibility information or assistance to attend this meeting should contact Jillian Harvey at jharvey@town.arlington.ma.us. This meeting is open to all interested individuals.